

ought to be downstairs on that charge!"

"But how—what—I got your wire—I came right in. Is there—did she?"

"Certainly," responded Parr, nodding. "You are a wonder, Oliver!" he added. "What put it into your head to start Sophie after her husband? Don't tell me you didn't," said the Deputy, as Armiston tried to break in with a word. "I heard you. You knew Sophie was listening-in on the telephone the other day in your study when you told me in a loud voice to go out and find her husband—that he had squealed on her. On the level, Armiston, I thought you were squealing on me! Then it all came over me. You've got the goods! You're all right, Oliver!"

"Well, it was the obvious thing to

swiftly how the bogus Amos P. Huntington, who had been blown up by synthetic rubber and cremated, in the end came to his death and burial in so obscure a manner that the police would never have known who he was except for one thing Sophie overlooked.

"My window-washer," said Parr. "He's a wonder, too. He managed to borrow a razor, among other personal effects of the late Amos P., that Sophie had packed away in a box. We found finger-prints on it that correspond to that," he said, pointing at the glass paper-weight. "When his dead body turned up, with the same finger-prints, the rest was simple enough." And Parr, who had complacently encompassed the murder of a murderer, by neglecting to follow So-

"Let me have your keys," commanded the traffic policeman. He took the proffered keys and calmly locked the doors of the litter. Sophie could not escape now, except by smashing glass. "Take her to Headquarters!" commanded the traffic man. While Parr and Oliver sat talking, Sophie was announced. The graceful little woman clothed in a cloud of black entered weeping and sniffing in her handkerchief under her veil.

"Lift up the curtain, Sophie," said Parr, with a full breath of elation. "This is where you stop for the night."

She lifted the veil, disclosing a tear-stained face, pathetically pretty. Parr with an oath lifted himself out of his chair.

"What's the joke, Hanrahan?" he bawled at the red-headed mechanic.

Hanrahan was holding his head. He was reviving that episode in the kitchen that made the country seem so attractive to him a few days gone by.

"Where did you get those clothes?" demanded Parr roughly.

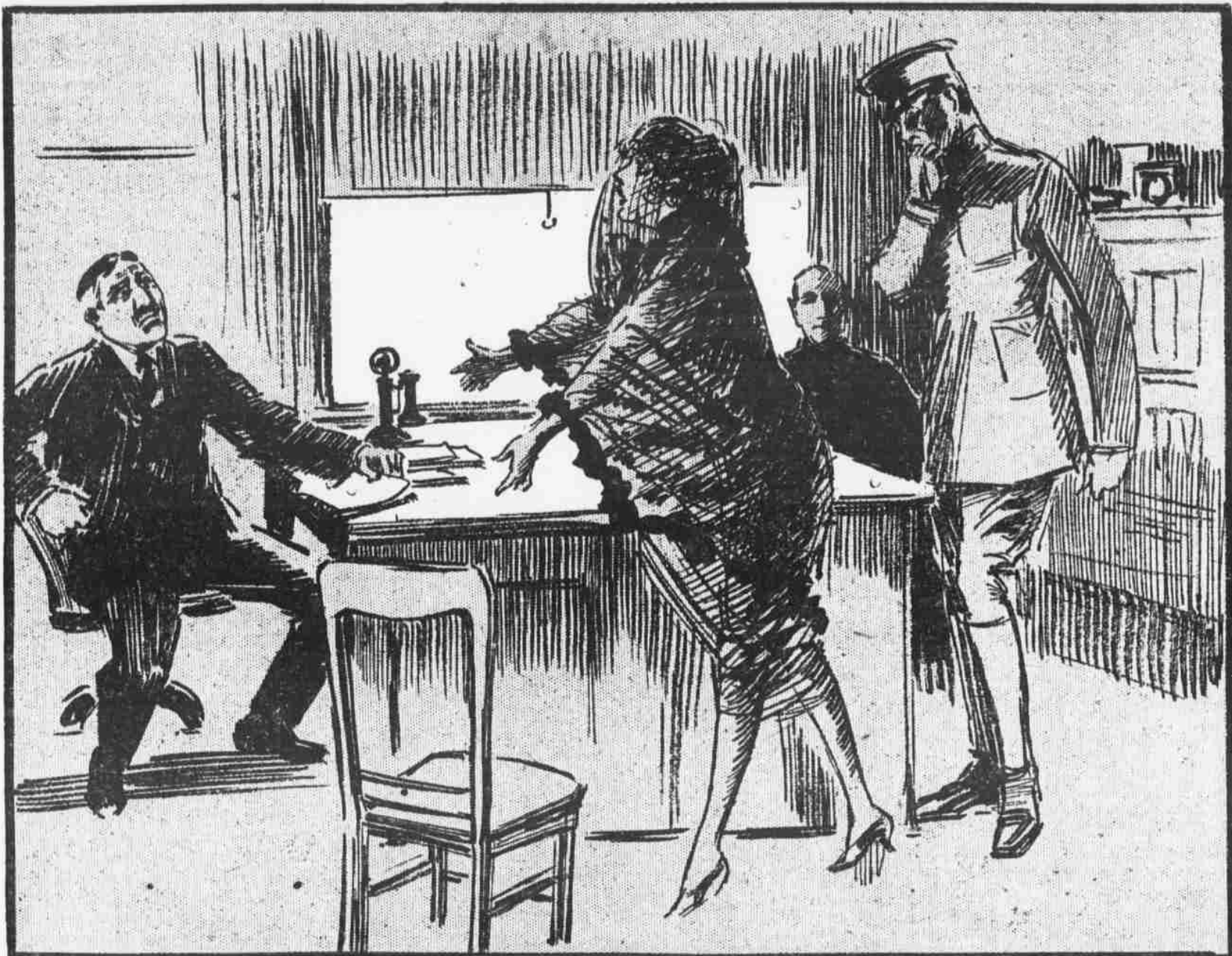
"Madame, she gave them me—she no want them more. My 'usband—he was die—I est mort!"

"Take her away!" roared Parr.

"What is the charge?" asked the meek Hanrahan.

"Oh, anything—anything," snarled Parr, "so long as the newspapers don't get it. You, a detective! You on the Sophie Lang case! Oh, dear, oh, dear!"

When the door closed on the figures, it was Armiston who broke the painful silence.



THE LADY HERE BURST INTO A TORRENT OF WORDS. "I DO NOT UNDERSTAN," SHE WAILED, IN FRENCH ACCENTS.

So, of course," agreed Oliver, now preening himself. "I knew you couldn't find him. I knew the only way was to scare her into starting after him herself—then your men could trail along behind. It made a very good ending of the story, I thought," said Oliver. "Your men trailed her, of course?"

"Well, as a matter of fact," said Parr, weakly, "she got the jump on us. You know Sophie! So we just sat back and waited."

"Waited!" ejaculated Armiston.

"Oh, Sophie did her part—she produced him, all right," said Parr. "Dead," he added grimly. He related

phie too closely, leaned back in his chair. "Oh, they all come to pot, sooner or later," he said, in his philosophic mood again.

"But, Sophie!"

"Oh—she's on her way downtown now," exclaimed Parr. "Sit still. You'll see her."

THE Dresden china widow, an hour before, had set out on her afternoon drive to air her red-headed mechanic. At 42d Street a policeman said gruffly: "Drive up to the curb, young fellow." The red-headed mechanic had obeyed with alacrity.

"Joke, sir? Joke?" protested Hanrahan.

"Look at her you fool!" snarled the Deputy. "Look what you've brought here—this rag doll done up in crepe!"

The lady here burst into a torrent of words. "I not understand," she wailed, in French accents. "I am Madame Huntington maid. She move. I come to town—three-four days—to make ready. She move. This afternoon I go out—to get little air. The policeman—he lock me in! Oh, he lock me in! I scream—I cry—I knock on the window. I come here. This man, he say to me 'don't start nothings'—"

"After all," he said dreamily, "it was a signed masterpiece! Eh, Parr?"

That was the end of the Sophie Lang case. There were loose ends, of course, such as William, and the maid, and the jettisoned quarter of a million dollars. The underlings proved to be very faithful tools of the lady, who took their medicine, maintaining to the end their ignorance of such a purely legendary person as Sophie Lang.

THE END.

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